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Notes for Contributors

We invite contributions on all aspects of the history and archaeology of Banbury and its surrounding region, often referred to as 'Banburyshire'. Material from amateurs and professionals is equally welcome. The Editor will be pleased to send guidance notes to potential authors, so as to ease the process of submitting a piece for consideration.

Cake and Cockhorse

The magazine of the Banbury Historical Society, issued three times a year.

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As noted in a previous issue of *Cake & Cockhorse*, 2018 has been the year in which the Banbury History Society has celebrated its 60th anniversary, a fact that bears repeating. This issue of our journal, the last of this celebratory year, is an appropriately bumper one. We are pleased to publish a significant piece of research by Rosemary Leadbeater into the appalling impact of smallpox on 18th-century Banbury. The success of medical science in eliminating smallpox has already rendered it somewhat remote. Rosemary's article reminds us just what a terrifying scourge it was, and that it was no respecter of social position. We also have a highly topical (for us) article featuring a royal wedding. Those of our members who watched the wedding of Prince Harry to Meghan Markle in May were doubtless ruminating on the fact that 160 years ago, in 1858, Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, also Victoria, married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha – admittedly at St James's Palace rather than in Banbury, but as Elizabeth Timms points out, Banbury Cross was erected to celebrate the princess's wedding. Elizabeth goes on to illustrate the remarkable number of occasions on which the Queen stopped at Banbury on her travels.

As before with the final issue of the volume, readers will find comprehensive indexes of persons and places. The indexes are essential aids to any researcher; without them *Cake & Cockhorse's* accessibility, and therefore its usefulness, would be limited. Although this issue is mostly about Banbury itself, the place-name index of the whole volume shows how much we cover the rest of Banburyshire and further afield, and the intriguing index of names ranges from a boatman to a bishop.

Finally, do please make a note of the programme of talks that the Society has arranged for 2018-19. For instance, in November our author Rosemary Leadbeater will be talking on smallpox in Banbury; but as you will see from the back cover of this issue, the topics and periods to be covered this season are wide and varied. We very much hope to have the opportunity of welcoming our members on multiple occasions in the months to come.

Cover: The wedding of Queen Victoria's daughter to the Crown Prince of Prussia.



The wedding celebrated in the Chapel Royal at St. James's Palace on 25 January 1858, between Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, the seventeen-year-old Princess Royal and Crown Prince Frederick William of Prussia.

Banbury's Cross and a Royal Wedding

Elizabeth Jane Timms

Banbury Cross is, of course, synonymous with local Oxfordshire folklore for many, because of the popular rhyme which has a 'fine lady' riding to it on her cockhorse.¹ Far less known perhaps is the fact that the Cross commemorates a royal marriage, a topical thought given the recent royal wedding at Windsor between HRH Prince Henry of Wales and Ms. Meghan Markle on 19 May 2018. Given the fact that the Cross now forms the centre of a busy roundabout, few would have time to contemplate the Cross in detail, let alone get closer to look at the three splendid royal statues that adorn it. The fact that one of these represents Queen Victoria is particularly apt, because the Cross celebrates the wedding of one of her children. Queen Victoria herself visited Banbury on many occasions, usually on her way to other destinations, therefore providing for us not only a fascinating glimpse of royalty in the historic market town, but also of royalty *en route*.

The wedding in question was celebrated on 25 January 1858, between Queen Victoria's eldest daughter, the seventeen-year-old Princess Royal and Crown Prince Frederick William of Prussia; the marriage was celebrated in the Chapel Royal at St. James's Palace, a royal peculiar and also the place where Queen Victoria had married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha in 1840. The wedding was commemorated in paint in 1860, by the Scottish artist John Phillip, described by the Queen as '*our greatest painter*', who had been present at the ceremony and made a sketch at the time.

Importantly, this was the only one of the marriages of his nine children which Prince Albert was destined to attend, as he died at Windsor a mere three years later. Of the day itself, the Queen wrote that she '*felt as if [she] were being married over again, only much more nervous*'.² The wedding day was captured in early daguerreotype, at a time before photography was fully developed; the Queen wrote that the Princess

¹ Leo J de Freitas, *The Banbury Chapbooks*, BHS 28, 2004; W Potts, *Banbury Cross and the Rhyme*, Banbury Guardian, 1930; *Oxon VCH* 10, pp. 11-12.

² Quoted in Hibbert, Christopher, *Queen Victoria: A Personal History*, p.243, 2000.

Royal looked ‘*very touching and lovely with such an innocent, confident and serious expression... her veil hanging back over her shoulders, walking between her beloved father and dearest Uncle Leopold*’.³ Typically in Queen Victoria’s family, items deemed of special sentimental importance were photographed for the private album known as the ‘Album of Important Occasions – 1837-1885’ which survives in the Royal Photograph Collection; the Princess Royal’s wedding veil was photographed in its own right, as was the monumental cake made for the occasion.⁴

Incidentally, a beautiful, gilded volume of the ‘*History of Banbury, including copious historical and antiquarian notices of the neighbourhood*’ by Alfred Beesley from 1841 – during Queen Victoria’s reign and the year after the Princess Royal’s birth – survives in the Royal Collection.

The Banbury Cross was designed by British Gothic Revival architect John Gibbs and stands fifty-two feet and six inches in height. It was begun the year after the marriage of the Princess Royal and completed in 1860, the year prior to Prince Albert’s death. It was erroneously believed to have stood on the site of an earlier medieval cross, which had been demolished by Puritans in the early seventeenth century (an assumption based on the fact that Banbury until then had three crosses).⁵ Gaslights were added to the Cross in 1888; the Victorian railings were removed in 1927, around the time that the Cross’s removal from its present position was under discussion, due to the possible hazard that it represented as a convergence point for the roads leading to Oxford, Warwick, Shipston-on-Stour and of course, the busy main High Street.

Three statues representing Queen Victoria, Edward VII and George V were placed in the three niches of the Cross in 1914, although a design for six niches had been part of the original plan; it is topped by a gilt cross. The choice of Queen Victoria is a particularly apt one, given the fact that the Cross represented the marriage of her eldest daughter, the Princess Royal.

³ Quoted in Hibbert (fn 2), p. 243

⁴ Timms, Elizabeth Jane, in ‘The weddings of Queen Victoria’s children’, Royal Central, 2018, retrieved 25/05/18.

⁵ Paul Harvey, ‘Where were Banbury’s Crosses?’ and Barrie Trinder, ‘The Rebuilding of Banbury Cross’, *C&CH* 3, 10, pp.183-96 (1967); *Oxon VCH* 10, p.23 (1972); Graham & Waters, *Banbury Past & Present*, pp.12-13 (1999).

The Queen was extremely close to the Crown Princess of Prussia – later German Empress – something to which their enormous correspondence numbering sixty volumes, contained in the archives at the former castle of Friedrichshof near Frankfurt, certainly testifies.⁶ Edward VII was also extremely fond of his elder sister and caused a marble medallion to be erected ‘In Loving Memory’ of her in Craithie Church in royal Deeside – close to the private royal residence of Balmoral – as a pendant to that to his brother, Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh. The medallion was inscribed at the wish of Edward VII as being ‘*erected by her sorrowing brother, Edward R & I.*’⁷ In 1901, Edward VII visited the great castellated manor house of Broughton Castle, local to Banbury and slept in the King’s Chamber. Photographs of the royal visit are still preserved at the Castle in the collection of the Fiennes family.

Queen Victoria mentioned passing through Banbury on numerous occasions. We know this because of her detailed journals, which run to one hundred and forty-one volumes, kept at Windsor. What makes her mentions of Banbury particularly fascinating is the fact that she came to the historic market town not as part of an official visit, but as part of her travels. Looking at her journals, we can see that she normally chose Banbury as a place to stop for refreshments, usually *en route* from Gosport to Scotland – usually Ballater, the latter being the nearest railway station for Balmoral – but sometimes in reverse, for example in 1887, when she stopped at Banbury from Ballater. There were other occasions however, such as when she travelled from Gosport to Renfrew or Llanderfel, as she did in the late 1880s. Her journals record this practice as early as 1852 and by 1875, it seems as if this had now become an accepted pattern of things, as part of her northbound journey to Balmoral. Perhaps significantly, she does not mention Banbury Cross, made to mark her daughter’s marriage.⁸

The possibility that the Queen chose Banbury as a place for refreshments because of the legendary Banbury Cakes – first recorded in 1586 – might be seen to be reinforced by the fact that the Queen was presented with a basket of the local delicacy in 1866, when the Queen passed through on her way to Wolverhampton to see the new statue erected to the Prince Consort.

⁶ Hibbert, p.503, 2000 (fn. 2).

⁷ McCann, Nick, *Craithie Church, Royal Deeside*, p.19, 2000.



Queen Victoria's Saloon

Fascinatingly, the Queen refers to a ‘Saloon’ when visiting Banbury; this refers to what is now fondly known as ‘Queen Victoria’s Saloon’, built for the Queen in 1869 as a veritable ‘palace on wheels’ and now kept at the National Railway Museum in York; it was announced in December 2017 that the Saloon – adapted into one carriage in 1895 – would be restored, thanks to a private donation. It would have been in this Saloon that Queen Victoria would have pulled into the Great Western railway station, when she came to Banbury.

She continued the practice of stopping at Banbury into the 1890s; the last occasion of her life that she did so was in her train *en route* from Windsor to Ballater, a later trip to Balmoral, in 1897.

Banbury continued to celebrate Queen Victoria’s family, even after the Queen’s death in 1901. A photograph of the Original Cake Shop in 1902, shows the Shop decked out for Edward VII’s coronation, celebrating with the proud words ‘...trumpets blare and joy-bells ring, we cry God strengthen and God Save The King’.⁹

Yet another King on Banbury Cross was celebrated too, Queen Victoria’s grandson, George V. The clock on the High Street was put there to mark George V’s coronation in 1911 and was designed by the

⁹ Graham & Waters, p.25.



*Banbury Cross, after the three statues had been erected in 1914.
The railings were removed in 1927.*

clockmaker, jeweller and optician, F. W. Ginger. It was in celebration of George V's coronation that the three statues were added to Banbury Cross. These three royal statues together might bring to mind the famous photograph of 'four generations', taken at White Lodge, Richmond in 1894, showing Queen Victoria holding the future Edward VIII at his christening, surrounded by Edward VII and George V, a unique occasion in which all three heirs to the British throne were living and centred around the current ruling monarch.

A photograph from the *Banbury Guardian*, showing a street party on Cherwell Street to mark the Coronation of Her Majesty The Queen in 1953, is held in the Royal Collection.

The Banbury Cross has come to represent far more, of course, than a royal wedding back in 1858; it has become part of the fabric of the town's folklore. It is interesting however to remember, in the light of the recent wedding of Queen Victoria's great-great-grandson, HRH Prince Henry of Wales, that this Cross was in fact erected, to celebrate the wedding of her eldest daughter.

Elizabeth Jane Timms is a royal historian. She writes for an academic journal on royalty as well as for magazines and the web.

‘In 1698 Richard White left £100 in his will, the income from which was to be used for educating poor children born in Banbury; in 1705 the Banbury Blue-coat School Trust was founded... The master was also required to accompany the children to church each Sunday, where they had a special gallery reserved for them. There they were to lead the congregation in the metrical psalms. On Lady Day 1706 Joseph Watts was appointed choir-master to teach them the tunes. The children were all provided with a uniform to wear. It became one of the local sights to see them processing to church for Divine Service. The choir became highly competent. In 1747 Watts published a collection of Psalm-tunes, Anthems and Canticles for them.’

Burroughs makes no further mention of the Bluecoat children, but Banbury people would indeed remain familiar with them, in their distinctive uniforms, for well over a century.

* * * * *

On 28th June 1769 a General Vestry was held ‘to consult about setting Boys and Girls at the Workhouse to ’Prentice; twas agreed that the Overseers should make what Agreement they can with those Persons who are to have them.’ These would have been from the Workhouse, not the Bluecoat school, but the Overseers of the Poor dealt with both.

Banbury Borough lacks significant apprenticeship records. However, However there is a collection of 34 apprenticeship indentures, in the Bodleian Library,³ specifically of Bluecoat boys (there are none for the girls). These are listed below on pages 288-290.

Indentures are lengthy and verbose, but very similar, so are not quoted here in any detail. It may be significant that the earliest is dated 26th May 1769, only days before this vestry meeting. James Essex (born 1755, son of Robert Essex, labourer, and Elizabeth) was apprenticed to William Nicoll of Spon Street, parish of St John the Baptist, Coventry, for seven years, ‘in the Art and Mystery of a Weaver, which he now useth, shall teach and Instruct or Cause to be taught and Instructed in the best way and Manner he can.’ It was witnessed by John Paine and Robert Barnes, the parish clerk. Also signed by Wm Nicholls [*sic*] and two Banbury Justices of the Peace, Saml. Clarson, Mayor, and Jno. Pain. There were several men named John Pain(e): the two signatures are different. The first was a grocer and overseer for that year. Mainly the same JPs signed each indenture for many years.

³ Bodleian Library MS. Top. Oxon. C.238.

Witnesses were generally Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor. The ‘consideration’ is not mentioned in this first indenture, but was usually £5, and for a term of seven years – each can vary. This might be funded from Lady Arran’s Trust (see footnote on page 290).

This first apprenticeship is unusual as being at a distance, although Banbury always appears to be linked more happily with Coventry than with Oxford. Two other earlier apprenticeships are, in 1771, Thomas Herbert to Thomas Cox, a shoemaker at St Mary Whitechapel, Mddx., and, 1772, John Talbot to John Brown, cork-founder[?] at Birmingham.

These apart, they all were in Banbury itself or the locality, the most distant being Kineton, Tysoe and Radway in Warwickshire; Neat Enstone and Hook Norton in Oxfordshire.

Altogether twelve boys were chosen to be apprenticed before 1778 when lists of pupils at the Bluecoat School become available. William Sparkes (1769) went to William Bonner, a carpenter and wheelwright at Bodicote. Samuel Collins, son of a weaver, was taken on by Frederick Woolmar, a pastry-cook and ginger-bread-maker (no place specified).

Thomas Plester (1773) went to Daniel Beale, a Hook Norton ‘linnen-weaver’. He was evidently successful, as thirteen years later, James son of Jarrett Beal, a Banbury labourer and probably related to Daniel, was duly apprenticed to Thomas Plester, now a qualified shag (plush)-weaver, still at Hook Norton. Boys apprenticed away from Banbury were likely to move away permanently.

Of the 28 apprenticed from 1780 on to 1816, most closely local, two died young and a dozen seem to have moved elsewhere. For boys fortunate enough to be apprenticed to a trade, especially if at a distance, it is unsurprising if they disappear from Banbury, in so far as they make no appearance in the marriage register and Rusher’s directories.

Seven at least took up their apprenticed trade in the town: William Aubrey (app. 1782) was still a weaver at his marriage in 1793; so was Thomas Heartwell (app. 1785), married in 1792. Thomas Butler, app. 1789 as a peruke-maker and hairdresser, was continuing as a hairdresser when he married in 1801. Samuel Lane, app. 1789 to a linen-weaver in Radway, was back in Banbury in 1801 practising his trade.

William Rusher himself, master at the Bluecoat School until 1792, took on Edward Taylor, a pupil there 1784-90, as a minor aged 15 direct from school, apprenticed to him as a stationer and bookseller. By the time of Taylor’s marriage in 1804 he had become a bookbinder.

John Groves Fairfax (b. 1798), app. 1816, a minor, for seven years, as a cooper, was named as such at the baptisms of his children, 1822-37, and he or his son in Rusher's Lists 1846-66.

Richard Gillett was the penultimate Bluecoat boy to be among those apprenticed, in 1816, to William Butler, a slatter and plasterer, married in 1822, also with his trade confirmed as such at the baptisms of his children from 1824, and his appearance in Rusher's List, 1837-54.

Finally, the Bluecoat boy who seems to have been the most successful of those who remained in Banbury: William Golby. Confusingly there were *two* William Golby's, both Bluecoat schoolboys.

The younger William Golby was born January 1794, at the School 1805-11, his father Thomas Golby, another mason. He must be the Bluecoat boy apprenticed in 1811 to William Bloxham, a well-known Banbury carpenter and joiner. Sadly, it seems likely he was also the William Golby who died in May 1814 aged 17.

The elder William Golby was born March 1781, his father also a William Golby, and also a mason. Presumably it is him who married Ann Charles in 1819, with children from 1820-1831. He too was a mason, initially in Church Lane. Later he moved up-market to Sheep Street and then St John's Street, becoming a victualler and landlord of the *Jolly Weavers* from 1832-47.

Two abandoned their qualification: Thomas Plester's apprentice James Beal, instead of shag-weaving, by 1832 was listed by Rusher as a baker. John Friday, indentured to the butcher William Butler, by 1806, was a sawyer. Others who didn't take up their trade locally include Thomas Perkins as a garter-weaver (1780), originally with Thomas Cobb, of the well-known family at Calthorpe House; Joseph Glaze (1809) as a boat-builder in Neithrop with Thomas Cotton; and (1809) John Rusher's apprentice printer Richard Gazey.

The Bluecoat boys' literacy is demonstrated by the number who at their marriage were able to sign the register, contrasting to those of the Bluecoat girls who as brides still had to make their mark. Clearly the master did not spend much if any of his time in teaching them writing that was beyond the skill of their mistress.

This appears too as we at last get in a genuine personal touch with the boys themselves, in that the ten last indentures, 1809-1816, were actually *signed* by the boys themselves. The elegant copperplate signatures show how well they'd been taught – in contrast, some of the 'masters' to whom they were indentured could still only sign by mark!

Banbury Bluecoat Boys' Apprenticeship Indentures

Date	Name & Father <i>B. = Banbury</i>	Master <i>Np = Neithrop</i>	Trade & location
1769	Essex , James s Robt, labr, to William Nicholls , weaver, Coventry <i>Overseers</i> : John Paine, Robt Barnes		
1769	Sparkes , John s Wm, labr, to Wm Bonner , carpenter/wheelwright, Bodicote <i>Churchwarden</i> : John Wheatly; <i>Overseer</i> : James Golby		
1769	Collins , Saml s Saml, weaver, to Frederick Woolmar , pastry-cook & ginger- <i>Witness</i> : Stepn. Wicherd junr.[?]		bread baker [no location]
1771	Herbert , Thos s Thos, labr, to Thomas Cox , shoemaker, St Mary <i>Sgs</i> : Jno Bexwell[?], Tho. Scarr		Whitechapel, Middx
1772	Talbot , John s Joseph, labr, to John Brown , cork[?]-founder, Birmingham <i>Sgs</i> : Thomas Mort... [illegible], John Co[th?]jett [illegible]		
1773	Plester , Thomas s[?] Wm, labr, to Daniel Beale , linnen-weaver, Hook Norton <i>Ch'wdns</i> : John Wheatly, Geo Dundas; <i>O'seers</i> : James Golby, John Rushworth		
1780	Perkins , Thomas s Wm, labr, to Thomas Cobb , garter-weaver, Calthorpe, Np <i>Churchwardens</i> : John Pearson, John Fry; <i>O'seers</i> : Wm Welch, Jno Armitt		
1782	Aubrey , William s Thos junr, labr, to John Essex , shag-weaver, Banbury <i>Churchwardens</i> : Saml Hill, John Pain; <i>O'seers</i> : John Hall, Wm Shirley		
1783	Cap , Thomas s Rd, barber, to Robert Cave , cordwainer, Banbury <i>Churchwardens</i> : Wm Pratt, Saml Hill; <i>O'seers</i> : Urban Fidkin, John Newman		
1783	Callow , Edward s John jun, weaver, to Joseph Hopkins , slatter/plasterer, B. <i>Ch'wardens</i> : Richd Haddon, Willm Pratt; <i>O'seers</i> : Urban Fidkin, John Newman		
1784	Upton , George, to William Loftus , grocer & chandler, Banbury <i>Ch'wardens</i> : Richd Haddon, Willm Pratt; <i>O'seers</i> : Abra'm Devonshire, Joseph White		
1784	Osborn , John s Wm, labr, Np, to Charles Pickering , carpenter/wheelwright, <i>Churchwardens & Overseers</i> : as above		Tysoe, Warw
<i>Bluecoat School</i>			
1785	Heartwell , Thomas s Thos, labr, 1778-86, to Charles Essex , shag-weaver, B. <i>Churchwardens</i> , as above; <i>O'seers</i> : Chas Wyatt, Charles William Ba[r]ker		
1786	Beal , James s Jarrett, labr, 1779-86, to Thomas Plester , shag-weaver, <i>Churchwardens</i> , as above; <i>O'seers</i> : Chas Wyatt, Charles Ba[r]ker		Hook Norton

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name & Father</i>	<i>Bluecoat School</i>	<i>Master, Trade & location</i>
1788	Holloway , John s John, labr, 1781-88, to Roger Leatherbarrow , tailor, B. <i>Churchwardens</i> : William Pratt, Joseph Bridgewater <i>Overseers</i> : Thos Hill, John Clarke.		
1789	Butler , Thomas s John, slatter, 1783-88, to John Page , peruke-maker & hairdresser, Banbury <i>Churchwardens</i> : John Pain, W. Pratt; <i>Overseers</i> : James Ward, Andrew Joad		
1789	Lane , Samuel s John, labr, 1783-88, to Joseph Enoch /Enock, linen-weaver, Radway, Warw <i>Ch'wardens</i> : Urban Fidkin, Wm Shirley; <i>O'seers</i> : Andrew Joad, James Ward <i>Witness</i> : Joseph Enock junr		
1789	Mander , Thomas s Thos, labr, 1781-88, to Thos Garrett , slatter/plasterer, Adderbury <i>Ch'wardens</i> : Urban Fidkin, Wm Shirley; <i>O'seers</i> : Andrew Joad, Philip Lambert		
1790	Friday , John s Richard, labr, 1787-90, to William Butler , butcher, Banbury <i>Ch'wardens</i> : Urban Fidkin, Wm Shirley; <i>O'seers</i> : John Gwilliam, Clerk Jessop		
1790	Taylor , Edward s Thomas, shoemaker, 1784-90, to William Rusher , stationer <i>Witnesses</i> : JW [N?] Golby, Rd Robert & bookseller, Banbury.		
1791	Butcher , John, s George, labr, 1786-91, to Samuel Gulliver , grocer & [Boucher] (d, 1795?) tallow-chandler. Banbury <i>Churchwardens</i> : W Pratt, Rich Heydon; <i>O'seers</i> : Wm Mosley, Wm Milward		
1791	Box , John s John, labr, 1785-91, to William Gill , plush-weaver, Banbury <i>Churchwardens</i> : W Pratt, Rich Heydon; <i>O'seers</i> : Wm Mosley, Wm Milward		
1805	Webster , Wm s Wm, labr, 1799-1805, to Robert Jarvis , brazier, Banbury <i>Witnesses</i> : Jno Munton; John Rushworth, William Webster		
1809	Hughes , John s John, Quaker, [no record], to John Mason , blacksmith, [signs by mark] Great Bourton <i>Witnesses</i> : John Rushworth, Wm Walford (for Town Clerk)		
1809	Gazey , Richard s Richd, weaver, 1801-08, to John Rusher , printer, Banbury [signature] <i>Witnesses</i> : John Rushworth, W. Walford		
1809	Glaze , Joseph s Thos, shag-weaver, 1804-09, to Thos Cotton , boat-builder, [signature] Neithrop <i>Witnesses</i> : John Rushworth, Jn Roberts		

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name & Father</i>	<i>Bluecoat School</i>	<i>Master, Trade & location</i>
1810	Taylor , Joseph s Richard, carpenter, 1806-10, to Henry Tibbetts , cordwainer, [signature]		Wardington
	<i>Witnesses: John Rushworth, John Heydon</i>		
1811	Hobday , Richard s Nehemiah, baker, 1805-10, to George Wilkins , tailor, [signature]		Kington, Warw
1811	Golby , William s Thomas, mason, 1805-11, to William Bloxham , [signature]		carpenter & joiner, Banbury
1811	Williams , William s Joseph, dyer, 1806-11, to Thomas Bennett , tailor, [signature] [died May 1814, ag 18]		Neat Enstone
1812	Eaglestone , John Harris s William, labr, 1807-12, to John Hawkins , tailor, [signature]		Adderbury
1816	Fairfax , John Groves s John, labr, 1808-13, to John Stevenson /Stephenson [signature]		cooper, Banbury
1816	Gillett , Richard s Thomas, labr, 1811-13+, to William Butler , slater & [signature]		plasterer, Banbury
1816	Needle , Robert s Thomas, chairmaker, 1812-13+, to Stephen Cook , cooper, B. [signature] [Thomas died 1814 aged 61 – widow Mary approved indenture]		

Note. These apprenticeship indentures for Bluecoat schoolboys began in 1769, ending in 1816 when the school was merged with the National School. Arranging these would have taken time and money. Apart from the earliest they were confined to ‘masters’ in Banbury itself or its neighbourhood. Their payment was generally five pounds.

John Friday was born in 1777, son of a Neithrop labourer. His mother died only three years later. Unsurprisingly at his apprenticeship to the Banbury butcher William Butler in 1790, he needed fresh clothing. A scrap of paper listing the cost is attached to his indenture: ‘Briches’, 4s.9d; Coat & Waistcoat, 12s., 1 pr. Shoes, 5s.6d. and shirts, 9s.9d., totalling £1.12s. Making the shirts cost 1s.6d., and a Hat, 2s.3d. Together with an illegible item, he was set on his new life by the outlay of £1.18s.9d. The survival of this account is fortuitous. No others have occurred.

There are two gaps in the period when there are no apprenticeships: 1774 to 1779, and 1792 to 1808 (except for just one boy in 1805). There is no way of knowing if this meant there were no boys worthy of indenture, or no masters prepared to take them. Funds for the £5 indenture fee might not be available.

Two charities specifically helped such boys: Thomas Melcalfe left property in 1712, *inter alia* to pay £10 every second year to apprentice two poor boys; and the Countess of Arran’s Charity (1756), whose income was applied in putting out youths as apprentices.*

* Beesley, pp.250-1, fn 25; *Oxon VCH* 10, p.125.

Encountering Smallpox in Eighteenth-century Banbury

Rosemary Leadbeater

In the early 1720s the Mayor of Banbury, surgeon John Welchman, Richard Burford, mercer, and George Robins, goldsmith, both of whom had been Overseers of the Poor, had something in common: all were mourning the deaths of their children from the smallpox epidemic that swept the town in the eleven months between August 1718 and July 1719. Francis Burford, aged 22 months, died of the disease in December 1718 and seven-year-old James Robins in February 1718/9. John Welchman suffered particularly severely; three of his five children – Edward, aged 12, William, ten and Elizabeth six were buried within five months of each other.

Smallpox was one of the chief killer diseases in England from the end of the plague in 1666 to the late eighteenth century and was not entirely eradicated until 1979. There was no effective curative treatment until its elimination by prevention. Whilst endemic in large urban areas, the effects in smaller communities never previously exposed to the disease were often catastrophic. In Iceland, for example, in 1707 18,000 people died of smallpox out of a total of 50,000, equivalent to 36 per cent of the population.¹ Suffering was often prolonged and potentially more fatal than most illnesses (with an average case fatality of between 16 and 30 per cent), the disease was infectious and therefore extremely hazardous to loved ones, the outward manifestations of cutaneous injury were disturbing, and, if the person survived, permanent disfigurement was very likely.

One of the earliest references to smallpox in Oxfordshire appears in the seventeenth-century diaries and papers of Oxford historian, Anthony Wood. Of his personal experience of the disease, Wood recorded in 1635 that he ‘... had the smallpox so much that I was for a time blinded with them’.² Fourteen years later, Oxford Professor Thomas Willis noted that smallpox in the city of Oxford was not extensive, ‘yet most died of

¹ Edward J. Edwardes *A Concise History of Smallpox And Vaccination In Europe* (London: H. K. Lewis (1902), 13.

² A. Clark, *The life and times of Anthony Wood, antiquary, of Oxford, 1623-95*. http://www.archive.org/stream/woodslifetimes01claruoft/woodslifetimes01claruoft_djvu.txt (accessed 15/8/2011).

it', although Willis was not convinced by his diagnosis as 'the smallpox had never been in that place'.³ By the mid-seventeenth century the scenario in the city was beginning to change. In 1654 'at Oxford, about autumn, the smallpox spread abundantly'⁴ and later in the century Wood's diaries included regular references to the disease being prevalent in the city. In contrast, however, away from the city in the seventeenth century smallpox appears to have been a mild disease, Dr Plot noting in 1677, '... here [in Oxfordshire] they [smallpox] are so favourable and kind that be the nurse but tolerably good, the patient seldom miscarries'.⁵

By the early eighteenth century, however, away from the city smallpox was becoming a serious threat. Multiple deaths from the disease had had hit the parishes of Bicester, Eynsham and Watlington. Bicester and Eynsham were particularly badly affected. Bicester was a large and prosperous market town with a significant army headquarters, factors which brought outsiders into the town. Eynsham was also a market town. The presence of visitors, whilst providing opportunities for further wealth and economic growth, increased the susceptibility to a contagious disease which, unlike other infections such as fever, was not especially influenced by privation or prior unhealthiness. As an active trade centre that also participated in a high level of social activity, Banbury was particularly susceptible and Banburians suffered two severe smallpox epidemics in 1718-9 and 1731-33. These two outbreaks accounted for 119 and 93 smallpox deaths respectively at a time when the population was around 3,000 and average annual burials in the parish at that time was around 73.⁶

³ C. W. Dixon, *Smallpox* (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1962), 192-3. US National Library of Medicine, www.nlm.nih.gov/nichsr/esmallpox_dixon (accessed 24/4/2012).

⁴ C. Creighton, *History of Epidemics* Vol 2 (1965), 437, 'Remaining Works'. Trans by Pordage. Lond. 1681, 142.

⁵ Creighton, *A History of Epidemics in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), 467. Creighton quotes from Plot's *Natural History of Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1677), 23. Robert Plot was the first Professor of Chemistry at the University of Oxford and the first Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum.

⁶ My calculation has assumed a population of Banbury of approximately 3,000, taken from P. M. Kitson, (2004). *Family formation, male occupation and the nature of parochial registration in England, c.1538-1837*, 39. PhD thesis. Downing College.

Figures 1 and 2 (overleaf) compare smallpox burials with total burials in the two 'epidemic seasons' in Banbury. At its peak, smallpox accounted for a very large proportion of all deaths; 69 per cent in 1718-19 and 48 per cent in the period December 1731 – October 1733. The first smallpox burial in 1718 was that of Elizabeth Osborne, aged 4 years, daughter of wheelwright John Osborne. In the second outbreak, the first to be fatally affected was Joseph Wilson, aged 2 years, son of surgeon and apothecary, Mr Thomas Wilson. The Wilsons were one of three families that experienced child smallpox deaths in both epidemics.⁷

Figures 3 and 4 illustrates the percentage breakdown in each smallpox epidemic by age and sex. Children were particularly prone to infectious disease generally and, as might be expected, they composed the largest group of fatalities in both epidemics. The diagrams also illustrate that adults comprised a smaller proportion of total smallpox deaths (35 per cent) in the second outbreak compared to 47 per cent in the first visitation. Men, especially, fared better when the epidemic hit a second time. Immunity derived from experiencing the disease in the first outbreak may have reduced the number of Banburians susceptible to smallpox infection, despite the numbers of 'at risk' immigrants likely to have moved into the area.⁸

Most of the 119 people who died of smallpox in Banbury 1718-19 can be grouped into 75 reconstitutable nuclear families, by extracting names of those who died of smallpox from parish burial registers and matching them with their families and burial dates as identified from family reconstitution (the process whereby individuals can be linked through

⁷ Family connections, ages of children and occupations are taken from family reconstitution data provided by the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure (CAMPOP). The work of CAMPOP entailed the technique of family reconstitution which necessitates unbroken and consistently detailed parish registers to allow the reliable linkage of one individual through several different records of vital events. Banbury was selected as a parish with ecclesiastical records of sufficient quality to be included in this programme of research into English historical demography. Reconstitutable families are those with individuals on whom we have enough information from parish records to link them to a particular family. See E. A. Wrigley, R. S. Davies, J.E. Oeppen and R. S. Schofield, *English Population History from Family Reconstitution 1580-1837* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1997).

⁸ Natural immunity to smallpox was unlikely. The contemporary consensus of opinion (1767) was that this occurred in only five or six per cent of the population.

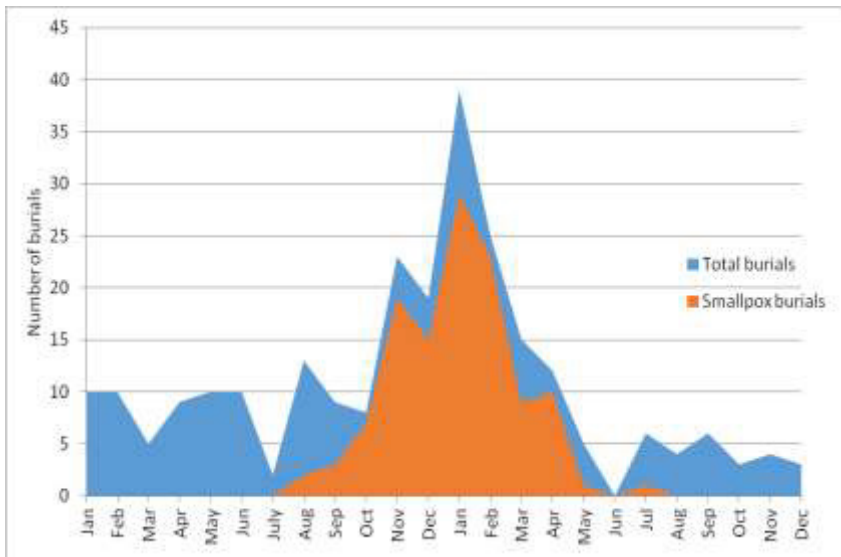


Figure 1. *Banbury: total and smallpox burials August 1718-July 1719*
 Source: Banbury Burial Register

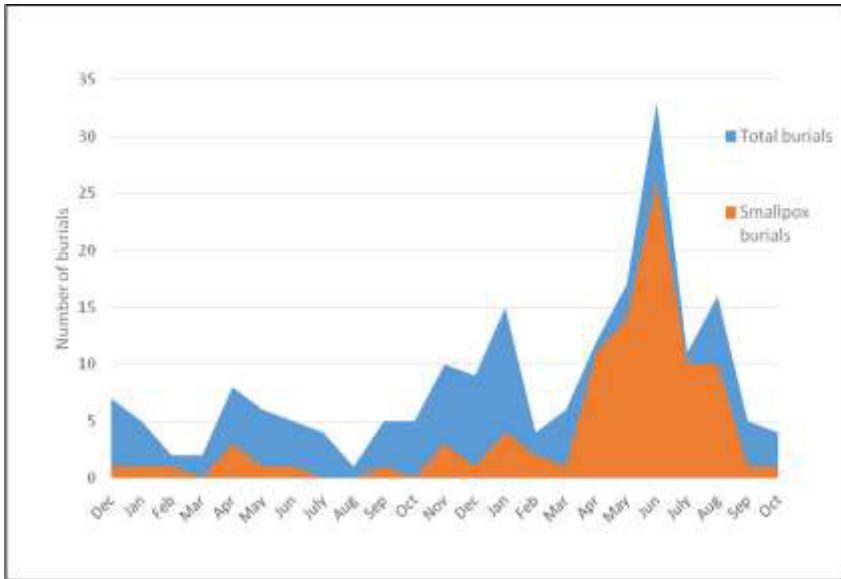


Figure 2. *Banbury: total and smallpox burials December 1731-October 1733.*
 Source: Banbury Burial Register

1718/19

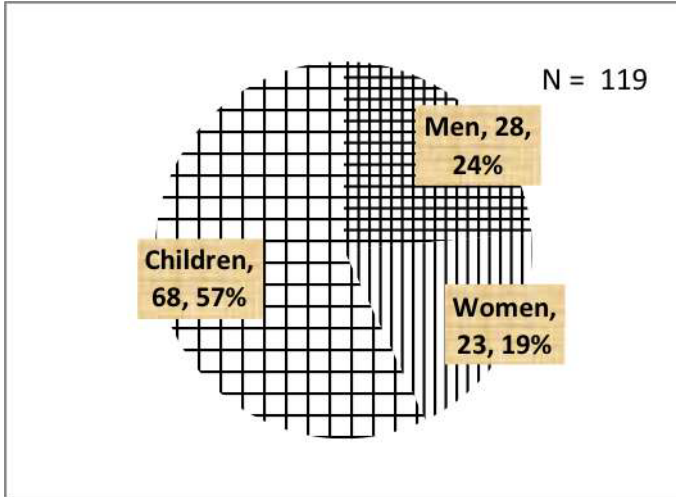


Figure 3. *Smallpox deaths in Banbury 1718-19 (all).*
Source: Banbury Burial Register 1718-1719

1731/33

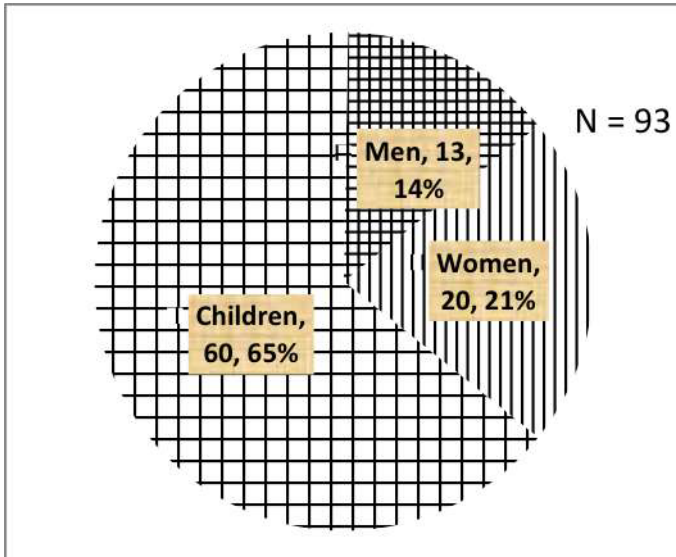


Figure 4. *Smallpox deaths in Banbury 1731-33 (all).*
Source: Banbury Burial Register 1731-1733

records of different vital events such as baptism, marriage and burial).⁹ The same applies to the epidemic in 1731-33; most of the 93 smallpox deaths can be placed into 62 reconstitutable families. Using this information we can investigate the course of disease, and the effects of smallpox mortality at family level and the relationship between adult and child smallpox deaths. Furthermore, family reconstitution enables us to categorise child smallpox deaths by age. Results show that infants (children under 12 months) were a particularly susceptible group, most probably due to their limited robustness against infection. In 1718-19 over 65 per cent of all the infants living in households who lost children to smallpox, perished. In fact, this age group was twice as likely to die of smallpox as any other childhood group. Fewer families experienced smallpox mortality in the second epidemic and here the proportion comprising the infant group was lower but still remained high at over fifty-four per cent.

Immunity is an important aspect of a disease when epidemics occurred twice within a family's lifespan. If parents and older children were immune due to exposure first time around, they could safely maintain households and attend their young children without the risk of infecting vulnerable members of the family. Mercifully, the number of families (three) that experienced smallpox deaths in both outbreaks was very small. Carpenter William Bloxham and his wife, Ann, had three children at the time of the first outbreak. The youngest, Ann, a newborn, died of smallpox in 1719/20. The Bloxhams had a further nine children, including twins, between 1720 and 1731. The two youngest, Jane and Nathaniel succumbed in the second outbreak, aged four and two years respectively. Garter-weaver, Francis Ward and his wife Hannah's third child, nine-day-old Francis, died of the disease in 1719. The Wards had five further children, two of whom, William and James, aged 11 and nine years were mortally affected during the second outbreak in 1733. Finally, eight-month-old John Wilson, son of apothecary Thomas and his wife Anne, died in 1718. The Wilsons had a further six children; Joseph, their youngest child died of smallpox in 1731, aged two years. These vignettes well-demonstrate the dreadful potential of smallpox to intensify child mortality in the early eighteenth century. All the children above were born after the first outbreak and, sadly, for these three families prior immunity of parents and older siblings had not protected them from a further attack of the disease.

⁹ See footnote 7.

Through the use of family reconstitution and parish registers we can now look more closely at the 62 families that experienced smallpox mortality in the second outbreak and see how their infants, the most vulnerable group, fared. These 63 families can be divided into 43 non-migrant households (*ie* they suffered a smallpox death in the first outbreak and were still resident in the parish in the second) and 19 in-migrant families (*ie* those not resident during the first outbreak). Aside from the three tragic cases above, overall, for the non-migrant families prospects for their babies were better than for in-migrant families. In this former group, four out of a possible 11 under-ones died of the disease. However, for the 19 in-migrant families (who suffered a smallpox death of any age), at least eight infants died during the second visitation. Tragically, in families hit by smallpox mortality, only one infant out of a total of 11 survived. This was likely to be associated with these families' lack of exposure to the disease first time around.

The importance of parental immunity is further compounded when we examine the likely transmission routes of smallpox during the two epidemics. Smallpox sufferers were buried very quickly after death, therefore by knowing burials dates we can assess when they died and estimate familial transmission routes. During the first outbreak, where both parental and child smallpox deaths occurred, in the large majority of cases (10 out of 12) the parental deaths occurred first. In only two families children died of smallpox before their parent. The burial of Elizabeth West, aged one month, preceded that of her father, Hawtayne by 13 days and that of six-year-old Sarah Wyatt, and her father, John, by 49 days (in fact, this long time lag suggests that John died as a result of re-entry of infection into the household). A similar pattern is seen in the second outbreak. Overall, seventy-five per cent of parents who died of smallpox were buried before their children.

The pattern above strongly suggests transmission of smallpox from parent to young child. This is further supported when we look at the timing of smallpox deaths of young children over the course of an epidemic lasting a considerable period of time.¹⁰ In almost all cases of smallpox deaths of young children, burials occurred after the epidemic

¹⁰ Any difference in length of illness between adults and children might skew results. However, there appears to be little reliable evidence to suggest that children suffered for longer or shorter periods than adults or that any one group experienced smallpox more acutely than another (apart from infants who were more likely to develop associated complications).

had well-established itself within the community. For example, only three out of a total of 29 under-fives with smallpox were buried in the first eight weeks of the first epidemic and only one out of 37 in the second. Strikingly, in the second outbreak, 11 out of 12 babies who died of smallpox were buried in the later stages of the course of the epidemic, *ie* in the final eight months of its twenty-three-month course. A similar scenario occurred in 1723-4 in Aynho, approximately six miles from Banbury. In this parish the first case of smallpox in the under-five age group was recorded seven weeks into the 16-month outbreak.¹¹ These points on the timing of the smallpox deaths of very young children suggest that, whilst they may have been protected from the wider community, they became infected subsequently by parents or older siblings (also bearing in mind that many people would have had the disease non-fatally). Their greatest risk appeared to be from within the home environment, an important consideration in the management and control of more modern diseases.

Interestingly, there was little difference in the risk of death to children aged 1-14, irrespective of which parent died of smallpox. Conversely, maternal deaths were very low in families with fatally-affected children. This is significant as it may indicate shared parental responsibilities when children were sick. Furthermore, in 1718-19 a noticeable point is that older children of fatally-affected mothers fared better than those of fathers where we might have expected the reverse to be true if mothers had closer contact with their children than fathers. In an examination of breast-feeding practices in the eighteenth century, historian Valerie Fildes has provided pictorial evidence of young children being spoon-fed by mother substitutes.¹² The presence of mothers, therefore, may not always have been essential for their children's survival. Mercifully, fatal cases of both spouses in Banbury were very rare; over the course of the two outbreaks only one family was affected in this way. Ambrose Dixon[e]

¹¹ *Royal Society Cl.P./23ii/87*. 'Account of those who had ye smallpox from September 1723 – December 1724'.

¹² V. Fildes, *Breasts, Bottles and Babies, a History of Infant Feeding* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1986), 224-226. Two illustrations by A. von Ostade in 1648 (246) and Hogarth in 1738 (240) showing infants being spoon-fed by mother substitutes, implying the use of breast milk substitutes in the form of 'pap' or 'panada', a consistency of milk or water and cereal. It is unclear, however, whether this form of feeding was particularly responsible for high mortality rates in infants, 217-219.

died of smallpox and was buried in January 1718/9 and his wife, Joane and children, Ambrose and Ann, in February of that year. It is speculated, therefore, that families managed smallpox in their household by assigning one parent, or another carer, to the management of sick children and caring substitutes were sourced when mothers fell ill with the disease. This may have been achieved by their removal to a pest or isolation house. Examples of the use of pest-houses in the county go back to the 1720s. In Banbury in 1724, overseers spent '1s.6d. ... for cleaning ye well at ye pest house' and in the following year, expenses of £2.6s.6d. were incurred for further maintenance of the building.¹³ Similarly in Northamptonshire, smallpox cases in Aynho in 1723-4 were likely nursed in the pest house known as the 'Dodgkenill', on the eastern border of the parish.¹⁴ Local initiatives in that parish also indicate a history of a pro-active concern for public health in the wider community. In 1721, two years before the smallpox outbreak, Aynho pump was paved around 'to keep any filthiness from running into the well' with a fine of 3s4d for 'washing guts .. without a tub or bucket to carry off the filthiness'.¹⁵ This measure of protecting the cleanliness of the water supply demonstrates a local well-managed approach to health care.

We have more detail on isolation practices in Oxfordshire from county records taken later in the eighteenth century. In Dorchester in 1741/2 overseers financed the removal of Mary Cox to Chipping Norton at a cost of £2. 17. 8d and paid a further 10s. 'for the Use of the House'.¹⁶ In the same year, overseers in Dorchester paid, 'Banister the Taylor for House kept for Jn Bottridges Wife and Family when they had the small pox, 9s'.¹⁷ In 1774, the same parish paid a Mrs Cox 10s.6d for a chaise to Henley for a child with smallpox and in Great Rollright smallpox sufferers were housed in the pest house in the late 1780s and 90s, a point

¹³ Oxfordshire History Centre (OHC), PAR21/2/A/1 'Banbury Vestry Book' (October 1724 [f.46, p.59 in forthcoming BHS 36], 8 July 1725 [f.49, p.63]).
Note: pre-decimal currency is here shown as '£2.6s.6d.'

¹⁴ <http://www.aynho.org.uk/sites/default/files/walk.pdf> (accessed 17/07/2014);
<http://www.aynho.org.uk/node/143> (accessed 16/7/2014).

¹⁵ N. Cooper, *Aynho: A Northamptonshire Village* (Banbury: Banbury Historical Society, 20, 1984), 150.

¹⁶ OHC, PAR87/5/A1/1: 96 'Dorchester Overseers Accounts'.

¹⁷ OHC, PAR87/5/A1/1: 97 'Dorchester Overseers Accounts'.



In the eighteenth century the use of pest-houses was a valued means of controlling contagious diseases. Deddington pest-house survived into the age of corrugated iron.

Image courtesy of Rupert Clark, Aynho History Society.

noted in burials registers of that parish.¹⁸ When smallpox broke out in the Radcliffe Infirmary in 1778 affected patients were removed to ‘a proper Place ... at very large expence’.¹⁹ Evidence indicates that these measures were effective in controlling the disease. In Chipping Norton in 1775 parish officials confirmed: ‘... those who have had the disorder [smallpox], were, before they became infectious, removed to the Pest House (some distance from the town) and are now quite recovered’.²⁰ In 1773 in Charlbury, a child with smallpox was ‘... immediately removed to the Pest House and in Abingdon in 1794 smallpox ‘... though accidentally brought into the Town, did not spread itself’.²¹ Perhaps the most effective yet poignant use of a pest house occurred in Ewelme in 1789. Labourer John King and three of his children, Elizabeth (13), Sally (11) and Mary (6) died of smallpox in May, 1789, being the only smallpox deaths in the parish. All three children were buried in the first

¹⁸ OHC, PAR87/A1/3:14 ‘Dorchester Overseers Accounts’; Parish burial register transcript of Great Rollright (1786, 1787, 1794, 1795, 1796, 1798, 1800).

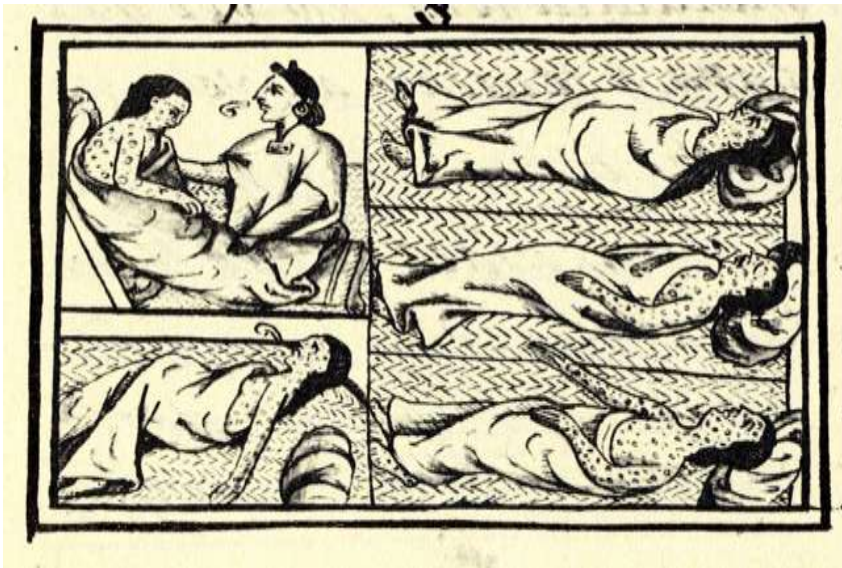
¹⁹ *Jackson’s Oxford Journal (JOJ)*, (26 December 1778).

²⁰ *JOJ* (24 June 1775).

²¹ *JOJ* (9 October 1773; 19 July 1794).

two weeks of the month and their father approximately two weeks later. King's wife, Jane, died on 14 June from 'mortification'. A memorandum is added to her burial record:

The mother also and two other children caught the disorder but recover'd and the infection spread no further, the family all being remov'd to Pyrton Hill as soon as it broke out ... This woman, the mother mentioned above, was found dead in bed, having previously complained very little, her death may be attributed to the effects of smallpox, brought on or assisted by grief for her recent loss.²²



Drawing accompanying text in Book XII of the 16th-century [‘Florentine Codex’](#) (compiled 1555–1576), showing smallpox victims in Mexico.

wikipedia.org/wiki/Smallpox

Community care for smallpox patients was also offered in the home of the patient or that of the carer. Nurses were employed at parish expense if the patients were poor. When three children out at nurse in Oxfordshire had smallpox ‘.... some extraordinary trouble and expense

²² OHC, Parish burial register transcript of Ewelme (2, 6, 14, 31 May, 17 June 1789).



Vaccination against smallpox performed by Baron Jean Louis Alibert in the early nineteenth century.

Field Epidemiology Manual <https://wiki.ecdc.europa.eu/fem/f/1954/t/767>

was had in respect of their cure', financed by the parish of St George Hanover Square, Westminster.²³ Reciprocal nursing arrangements were also practised with those known to have previously been in contact with the disease. When James Child's son had smallpox in Dorchester, Child was paid £5.3.6d 'for provision and allowance' and two nurses received a total of 6s.6d for attending him. Later that year, James received 3s.6d. for attending John Bottridge when he had the disease.²⁴ Larger groups of patients could also be catered for. Sarah Mark in Dorchester earned 6s. for '... Weighting [*sic*] on Mick Day, Mary Day, Jarvises and Berosdon with the smallpox'.²⁵ In Banbury private donations offset additional expenses incurred by parish overseers. In June 1733, at the height of the second epidemic when the number of smallpox deaths rose substantially to an average of almost one a day, £69.2s.3d was donated by Lords Guilford, Godolphin and Wallingford 'for the relief of the poor families distressed by the smallpox', £20 'received

²³ *City of Westminster Archive Centre*, C890 microfiche 567. Parish of St. George Hanover Square, 29 June 1763. I am grateful to Sally Tye for supplying this reference.

²⁴ OHC, PAR87/5/A1/1, Dorchester Overseers Accounts, 1741, 93 & 97.

²⁵ OHC, PAR87/5/A1/3, Dorchester Overseers Accounts, 1774.

from ‘the Worshipful James West Esqr... for the Relief of poor Familys afflicted by the Smallpox’ and £10.1s.4d. collected by the inhabitants of ‘Bisiter’ [Bicester].²⁶

It is estimated that approximately one in six of the population of Banbury lived in a family affected by smallpox mortality between 1718 and 1733.²⁷ The devastation and trauma caused by a visitation of smallpox to a household and the grief experienced by parents should never be underestimated. Nevertheless, some families appeared to draw on reserves in order to carry out their parish responsibilities, as demonstrated by John Welchman, George Robins and Richard Burford named earlier. All had experienced familial smallpox deaths but parish responsibilities were yet fulfilled by these men shortly after the first epidemic. Furthermore, William Spurr was head overseer in April 1721, two years after his wife died of smallpox, and paid £4 that year ‘for his faithfull service and expenses’.²⁸

Banburians also suffered smallpox mortality in 1760s, when compared to average annual burials mortality was particularly high (166 burials against an annual average by that time of approximately 77) Interestingly, during this outbreak seventeen guineas was collected by the inhabitants of Burford, ‘... as an affectionate Testimony of their Tenderness’.²⁹ (Burford parish had experienced a catastrophic epidemic some two years earlier.) In the same year Banbury parish funded the inoculation³⁰ of 120 parishioners when the Vestry agreed:

... that all Persons who belong to their Borough shall if willing receive the benefit of being inoculated ... at the Expence of the parish bearing all other Expences themselves unless the vestry should think proproit [proper] to allow them any Allowance they may think they should stand in need of.³¹

²⁶ OHC, PAR21/2/A/1, Banbury Vestry Minute Book, 11 June 1733 [*ff.60v-61*, pp.74-5].

²⁷ R.A. Leadbeater, ‘Experiencing Smallpox in Eighteenth-Century England’, PhD Thesis (2016). Oxford Brookes University, 157.

²⁸ OHC, PAR21/2/A/1 ‘Banbury Vestry Minutes’ (1720-1721) [*f.24*, p.17].

²⁹ *JOJ*, 22 November 1760.

³⁰ Inoculation is the insertion of a small amount of matter from a smallpox patient into a healthy person in order to induce an immune response. It was introduced into Britain in the 1720s but not widely practised until the 1750s, over 20 years after the second major epidemic in Banbury. The process was superseded by Dr Jenner’s cowpox vaccination at the end of the eighteenth century.

³¹ OHC, PAR21/2/A/1. Banbury Vestry Minute Book, 14 October 1760 [*f.133v*, p.123.]

Year	Parish	Smallpox burials	Total burials in smallpox year	Smallpox burials as per cent of total burials
1791	Kelmscott	3	3	100.0
1772	Cuxham	9	10	90.0
1758	Burford	185	247	74.9
1714	Eynsham	18	28	72.7
1758	Kencott	4	6	66.7
1715	Eynsham	18	28	64.3
1765	Goring	7	11	63.6
1707	Bicester	48	76	63.2
1724	Islip	12	19	63.2
1733	Banbury & Neithrop	80	132	60.6
1719	Banbury & Neithrop	72	122	60.1
1759	Kencott	3	5	60.0
1764	Goring	9	17	52.9

Oxfordshire parishes with highest percentage of smallpox burials to all burials 1700-99.

Source: Oxfordshire parish burial register transcripts.

Banbury burial registers for the eighteenth century, on which much of this survey is based, have been published by Banbury Historical Society:

1653-1723 (BHS **9**, 1968) and 1723-1812 (BHS **18**, 1984).

Now out-of-print, they are still available on microfiche or cd/dvd from Oxfordshire Family History Society.

Inoculations in this period were mainly carried out when smallpox infection was threatened or present and in April 1761, the *Jackson's Oxford Journal* reported the disease being 'entirely over at Banbury, and the Town perfectly clean from Infection'.³² Smallpox attacked Banburians again in the 1770s and 80s. However, in these outbreaks the numbers mortally affected were considerably lower and it is very likely that the effect of inoculation practice in the town was instrumental in helping to reduce smallpox mortality. In fact, the county as a whole suffered fewer major smallpox outbreaks after the 1760s than in previous decades. The Table opposite shows smallpox burials in Oxfordshire parishes throughout the eighteenth century in order of magnitude. Eleven out of the 13 most serious epidemics occurred prior to 1767. After this date only Kelmscott in 1791 and Cuxham in 1772 come into this category although as small parishes with populations of under 150, percentages are likely to be skewed by low numbers. It is possible to be confident that a change in the nature of the disease was not responsible for fewer later outbreaks.³³ The table shows that smallpox was clearly being controlled in the county more effectively during the later part of the century with the majority of the severe outbreaks occurring prior to the 1760s.

In Oxfordshire, after the 1760s, the number of child smallpox deaths in the county fell dramatically and by the last decade of the century, when very few smallpox deaths were reported, these were almost all of adults who had paid a high price for escaping the disease, either naturally or through inoculation, earlier in their lives.

Dr Rosemary Leadbeater is an Associate Lecturer at Oxford Brookes University where she teaches social history with reference to industrial change and the history of medicine and health. In 2016 she completed her PhD thesis 'Experiencing Smallpox in Eighteenth-Century England', on which this article is based.

³² OHC, PAR21/2/A/1 'Banbury Vestry Book' [f.134, p.124]; *Jacksons Oxford Journal* (18 April 1761).

³³ R. Davenport, L. Schwarz, J. Boulton (2011). 'The Decline of Adult Smallpox in Eighteenth-century London', *Economic History Review*, v.64, pp. 1289-1314, 4, 5, 33.

Book Review

The Story of Hook Norton: for readers of all ages, by Sean Callery. Paperback, 50 pp., illustrated, published by the Hook Norton Local History Group. ISBN 978-1-9998256-0-7. Available from Banbury Museum shop, or from David McGill (01608 730930 or scotlandend@btinternet.com), £8.99.

This beautifully designed booklet of 50 pages is designed for children of about nine years and upwards but is proving to be very popular with adults too. Hooky's history is presented in bite-sized chunks with separate sections for early Hooky and the Domesday Book, early schools, the Civil War, non-conformity and its chapels, the brewery, and so on. Hook Norton is a large village and always has been, and like many large villages, has a serious industrial past with ironstone mining and the railway built to transport the ore produced. It also had an eighteenth-century lunatic asylum, which took inmates from quite far afield, and its own fire-service relatively early in the nineteenth century.

There is something for everyone here, and the information is presented in easily-digestible snippets which are spread across the pages in unexpected ways, and backed with different colours. Many surprising facts appear on 'train-tickets' – 'taking you for a ride through Hooky's history'. There are also lots of colour photographs, and no boring white pages just with black text. I liked the scattered references to street names in the village, such as, 'D'Oilly Close is named after Hook Norton's early rulers'.

The booklet is a great success and it seems invidious to criticise – as it does what it sets out to do – but it seems a pity that there is no mention of Kate Tiller's brilliant work on Hook Norton, a classic study of the development of a village and its landscape, (though this is alluded to on the local history group's website), and if one were to cavil, there isn't much about the medieval open fields and their enclosure in the eighteenth century. But there is much here of interest and it provides a taste of all the various aspects of local history which are so fascinating to the inhabitants of a place like Hook Norton.

Deborah Hayter

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¹ R.A. Leadbeater, 'Experiencing Smallpox in Eighteenth-Century England', PhD Thesis (2016). Oxford Brookes University, 157.

¹ OHC, PAR21/2/A/1 'Banbury Vestry Minutes' (1720-1721) [f.24, p.17].

¹ *JOJ*, 22 November 1760.

¹ Inoculation is the insertion of a small amount of matter from a smallpox patient into a healthy person in order to induce an immune response. It was introduced into Britain in the 1720s but not widely practised until the 1750s, over 20 years after the second major epidemic in Banbury. The process was superseded by Dr Jenner's cowpox vaccination at the end of the eighteenth century.

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'B = Banbury; Np = Neithrop; 'fy' = family; 'B'coat' = Bluecoat

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BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Banbury Historical Society was founded in 1957 to encourage interest in the history of the town of Banbury and neighbouring parts of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

The magazine *Cake and Cockhorse* is issued to members three times a year. This includes illustrated articles based on original local historical research, as well as recording the Society's activities. Over one hundred and fifty issues and five hundred articles have been published. All but the most recent volumes have been digitised and are available on the Society's website (see inside front cover). Most back issues are also still available in their original form.

There are now well over thirty volumes in the records series. Those still in print include:

Banbury Baptism and Burial Registers, 1813-1838 (vol. 22).

The earlier registers, *Marriages 1558-1837, Baptisms and Burials 1558-1812*, are now out-of-print, but are available on fiche and CD from Oxfordshire Family History Society, website at: www.ofhs.org.uk

Oxfordshire and North Berkshire Protestation Returns and Tax Assessments 1641-1642 (vol. 24, with Oxfordshire Record Society).

King's Sutton Churchwardens' Accounts 1636-1700, ed. Paul Hayter (vol. 27).

The Banbury Chapbooks, by Dr Leo John De Frietas (vol. 28).

Banbury Past through Artists' Eyes, compiled by Simon Townsend and Jeremy Gibson (vol. 30).

Early Victorian Squarson: The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington, Part One, 1835-1848, ed. Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson (vol. 29).

Part 2. *Mid-Victorian Squarson, 1849-1869* (vol. 32).

Victorian Banburyshire: Three Memoirs, ed. Barrie Trinder (vol. 33).

Rusher's 'Banbury Trades and Occupations Directory' 1832-1906

(Alphabetical Digest and DVD facsimile) (vol. 34).

Junctions at Banbury: a town and its railways since 1850, Barrie Trinder (vol. 35).

Current prices and availability of other back volumes, and of *Cake and Cockhorse*, from the Society, c/o Banbury Museum.

In preparation:

Georgian Banbury before 1800: Banbury Vestry Book, 1708-1797 and other records.

The Society is always interested to receive suggestions of records suitable for publication, backed by offers of help with transcription, editing and indexing.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury. Talks are given by invited lecturers on general and local historical, archaeological and architectural subjects. Excursions are arranged in the spring and summer, and the A.G.M. is usually held at a local country house or location.

The annual subscription (since 2017) is **£15.00** for one member, **£20** for two members living at the same address, which includes any records volumes published. Overseas membership, **£20.00**.

All members' names and addresses are held on the Society's computer database for subscription and mailing purposes only. Please advise if you object to this practice.



Autumn 2018 / Winter 2019 Programme

The **September** Meeting is to be held at **St Mary's Church, Banbury**, at 7.30pm. Subsequent meetings are as usual at Banbury Museum, 7.30 pm, but, because of building work, access for **October** and **November** is best through the car-park between Chamberlain Court and the Mill, via the tow-path, through the café. From **December** back to normal, Museum entrance from Spiceball Park Road

Thursday 13th September 2018, at St Mary's Church, Banbury

St Mary's Banbury: Architecture, theology and liturgy

The Reverend Jeff West

Thursday 11th October 2018, at Banbury Museum, entrance from the tow-path

Exploring the origins of domestic animals using ancient DNA

Professor Gregor Larson

Thursday 8th November 2018, at Banbury Museum, entrance from the tow-path

"This loathsome and fatal disease": facing smallpox in 18th century Banbury

Dr Rosemary Leadbeater

Thursday 13th December 2018, entrance from Spiceball Park Road.

Trunks, slitters and fourchettes: Glove-making in West Oxfordshire

Carol Anderson

Thursday 10th January 2019

The Rise and Fall of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (d.1475)

Dr Rowena Archer

Thursday 14th February 2019

Discovering the Broughton Hoard and the Broughton Roman Villa

Keith Westcott

Thursday 14th March 2019

"... more good than school": Child Labour in 19th century Oxfordshire

Liz Woolley

Thursday 10th April 2019

Reminiscences: Banbury in World War Two; led by Karey Morley